UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/1995/68
22 May 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Substantive session of 1995
Geneva, 26 June-28 July 1995
Item 3 (b) of the provisional agenda*

# COORDINATION OF THE POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND OTHER BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING THEME: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREED CONCLUSIONS OF THE 1994 COORDINATION SEGMENT OF THE COUNCIL RELATING TO INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AGAINST THE ILLICIT PRODUCTION, SALE, DEMAND, TRAFFIC AND DISTRIBUTION OF NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES

## International cooperation within the United Nations system on drug control

## Report of the Secretary-General

**SUMMARY**

At its organizational session for 1994, the Economic and Social Council decided that the coordination segment of the substantive session of the Council of 1994 should focus on the coordination of the activities of the United Nations system in the area of drug control. The outcome of the Council's deliberations at its substantive session was agreed conclusions containing specific recommendations on coordination matters addressed to the various parts of the United Nations system, for implementation in accordance with General Assembly resolution 45/264 on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. The Secretary-General was requested to report on the implementation of those conclusions. The present report responds to that request.

* E/1995/100.

95-15184 (E) 310595 020695

/...

CONTENTS

| | Paragraphs | Page |
|---|---|---|
| INTRODUCTION | 1 - 2 | 3 |
| I. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL | 3 - 27 | 3 |
| II. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS | 28 - 29 | 8 |

## INTRODUCTION

1. At its substantive session of 1994, the Council considered the report of the Secretary-General on the status of international cooperation within the United Nations system on drug control (E/1994/58). After discussing the subject, the Council reached agreed conclusions on the coordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system related to international drug control (A/49/3, chap. 3, para. 34). The agreed conclusions of the Council were subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 49/168 of 23 December 1994.

2. The conclusions contained a number of concrete suggestions for enhanced coordination in this sector, addressed both to the United Nations system and to Member States. Particular attention was drawn to the first regular session of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) of 1995 as an opportunity for significant progress "towards the adoption of practical understandings and operational decisions". The present report is submitted to the Council to provide information on the implementation of the conclusions and recommendations of the Council to enhance coordination and cooperation in the drug control field.

## I. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

3. The 1995 spring session of ACC, held in Vienna from 28 February to 1 March 1995, devoted a full agenda item to the issue of international drug control. A discussion document entitled "The United Nations and drug abuse: enhancing system-wide cooperation" provided the basis for the ACC discussion. It had been developed by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) in consultation with the ACC Subcommittee on Coordination in Matters of International Drug Abuse Control and reviewed by the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ), which had presented its endorsement to ACC. The document analysed a number of specific sectors and subsectors that had significant interrelationships with drug abuse control, and also contained a number of suggestions for greater cooperation and coordination within the United Nations system.

4. Prior to the meeting of ACC, the Executive Director of UNDCP had circulated to all executive heads the conclusions of the 1994 coordination segment of the Council with regard to enhanced cooperation in the drug control field.

5. The Secretary-General, in opening the debate at the ACC meeting, called for a renewed commitment at the highest level to strengthening inter-agency cooperation in this crucial area, and invited ACC to explore further the relationships between drug abuse control and the economic and social issues coming within the purview of the different organizations of the system.

6. The Executive Director of UNDCP recalled that drug abuse control constituted one of the five priorities established by the General Assembly. He described the multifaceted nature of the problem and described a number of the

specific linkages that existed between it and other high priority socio-economic issues. In his view, the necessary preconditions had now been met to permit concerted action by the United Nations system. The 1987 International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking had developed both general and specific guidelines for Member States in the form of the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control. 1/ The 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances 2/ offered an up-to-date legal instrument. The Global Programme of Action adopted in 1990 by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session 3/ provided a concrete plan of action. The decision of the Assembly to create UNDCP, which came into existence in 1991, had added the needed institutional basis for leadership, while the creation in 1993 of the ACC Subcommittee on Coordination in Matters of International Drug Abuse Control provided a more dynamic inter-agency mechanism. All that would now be required was the commitment to move forward.

7. The Executive Director of UNDCP therefore called for active direct cooperation among the staff of the concerned organizations, both at headquarters and particularly at the field level, and urged that resident coordinators mobilize all relevant parts of the system represented in a given country to act in concert to assist national authorities in developing concrete action programmes.

8. In a wide-ranging debate, executive heads expressed strong support for the leadership role of UNDCP and the need to undertake joint actions in this area. They drew attention to the advance consultations that had been held individually between the Executive Director of UNDCP and many of them, which had served to provide a clearer focus on the linkages that existed between the drug control issue and the work of other organizations and programmes.

9. Among the linkages described, many of which were already the subject of collaborative efforts with UNDCP, were those between drug control and basic socio-economic development of zones where illicit raw materials were cultivated, offering possibilities for concerted action with a number of bodies including the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the international financial institutions. The work of FAO in remote sensing and satellite imaging was cited as another area where already existing collaboration could be enhanced. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the Universal Postal Union (UPU) addressed elements of their own work that touched on drug control issues, in relation to drug trafficking respectively by air and through the mails.

10. With regard to measures related to the illicit demand for drugs, the field of adolescent education addressed by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) presented an opportunity for incorporating drug abuse prevention into existing activities. The important linkage between the injection of drugs and human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) was also pointed out. In addition, programmes focusing on women, including those related to sexually transmitted

diseases and violence in households, were also mentioned. Attention was also drawn to the important issue of drug abuse in the workplace. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) welcomed the possibility for increased information-sharing as to possible preventive action in troubled areas where drug abuse could exacerbate problems of human displacement.

11. On a more general level, executive heads pointed out the interrelationships that existed between drug abuse control issues and poverty, both with regard to illicit cultivation and to drug abuse itself. The important social dimension of drug abuse was also stressed, as was the concern over linkages with organized crime and civil conflicts.

12. Considerable emphasis was placed on the need for an integrated approach at the country level, and strong endorsement was given to the idea of developing local inter-agency teams under the guidance of resident coordinators not only as a means of enhancing coordination within the system but also as a way to support the efforts of Governments to develop and implement integrated strategies.

13. A number of executive heads specifically addressed the System-wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control, urging that steps be taken to develop it into a more dynamic tool for the use of the entire system. Wide support was also expressed for the idea of incorporating the drug control issue into the work programmes of the various organizations.

14. ACC agreed on the following statement intended to provide a framework for concrete measures to enhance concerted action:

> Steps should be taken by organizations to identify on a systematic basis aspects of their respective programmes with potential major implications for drug abuse control issues, in order to ensure that these implications are taken fully into account in programme elaboration and implementation. In addition, international financial institutions should be urged to strengthen their support to UNDCP, other concerned organizations and affected countries. The regional commissions should be invited to make issues related to drug control a central part of their concerns.
>
> Ways should be found to ensure more coherent action and synergy within the United Nations system in dealing with drug abuse control. UNDCP, in line with its mandate, should lead and coordinate activities and offer its expertise and other support in this area. At the same time, other organizations should bring their own expertise fully to bear in countering problems relating to drug abuse:
>
> To these ends:
>
> (a) Concerned organizations should consult regularly at the global, regional and field levels. At the country level, resident coordinators should be invited to create informal inter-agency groups, especially in countries where UNDCP has activities, to ensure that drug abuse control needs are assigned the necessary

priority and addressed in a coordinated manner, particularly in the preparation of country strategy notes;

(b) The ACC Subcommittee on Coordination in Matters of International Drug Abuse Control, should act to review, strengthen and render operational the System-wide Action plan on Drug Abuse Control (SWAP) through the elaboration of specific multi-agency sectoral and/or subsectoral plans of action for drug abuse control at global, regional and subregional levels. Each of these joint plans of action should bring together those agencies whose own work touches on the particular issues concerned;

(c) At the same time, the plans of action should form the basis for the coordinated or joint fund-raising efforts that will be required to implement the plans;

(d) Taken together, the plans of action should constitute a truly multisectoral and system-wide approach to the drug abuse problem, as requested by member States, and should permit the system to do its part in implementing the Global Programme of Action endorsed by the General Assembly.

15. The ACC Subcommittee on Coordination in Matters of International Drug Abuse Control will next meet from 31 July to 2 August 1995 in Geneva. It will at that time attempt to implement the recommendations of ACC. Already at its 1994 session, the ACC Subcommittee had for the first time discussed and supported two proposals to develop multi-agency programmes at the subsectoral level, one proposed by FAO and the other by the International Labour Organization (ILO). The experience with these two precedents will be helpful in determining the appropriate way to proceed in other areas. The experience in the United Nations system with other multi-agency initiatives will also be closely examined to identify successful approaches.

16. A consensus exists within the ACC Subcommittee, reflected clearly in the discussions held at the fifth working session of CCPOQ from 1 to 3 February 1995, that SWAP in its present form, although representing a clear step in the right direction, is not yet the instrument that was intended. The steps proposed by ACC should help over a period of time to mould SWAP into a more dynamic and effective action plan based on enhanced cooperation by all partners in a coordinated and focused approach to international drug abuse control.

17. In the brief period since the 1995 spring session of ACC, a number of concrete steps have already been taken in furtherance of the agreement reached by the Executive Heads. UNDCP's own country and regional offices and centres have of course been fully briefed on the outcome of the meeting. At the request of the Secretary-General, a letter has also been despatched to all resident coordinators by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), drawing their attention to the statement of the executive heads, particularly with regard to concerted action at the country level. The Administrator has also indicated his intention to bring the outcome of the ACC meeting to the attention of UNDP's Executive Board.

18. The World Bank has formally written to UNDCP outlining its current thinking on the drug abuse control issue and indicating areas for possible closer collaboration. Subject to the invitation of the individual Governments concerned, the World Bank has confirmed its willingness to facilitate UNDCP's participation in consultative group meetings for countries where drug control is a serious problem.

19. UNFPA has already indicated to UNDCP its interest in incorporating drug abuse control subject-matter into some of its projects in Africa. UNIDO has advised UNDCP that it will bring the drug control issue to the attention of the forthcoming session of the Industrial Development Board, while UNHCR has been in contact with UNDCP in order to indicate its support for the conclusions of ACC and its intention to consider finding ways to work more closely together.

20. In line with one of the specific recommendations of the Council as reflected in the conclusions of the 1994 coordination segment, UNDCP now participates actively as an observer in the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP), attending most recently the session held in Rome from 2 to 3 March 1995.

21. Again, with specific reference to the views expressed by the Council, it should be noted that the World Summit for Social Development devoted considerable attention to the drug abuse issue. The document that had been prepared through a multi-agency initiative led by UNDCP was presented as part of the official documentation for the Summit. This was supplemented by other documents presented, inter alia, by UNDCP, UNDP and WHO.

22. The attention of the Council is also drawn to the discussions on coordination that took place at the thirty-eighth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs under agenda item 7 entitled "Monitoring of the implementation of the Global Programme of Action and the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control". The report of the thirty-eighth session of the Commission (E/1995/29) is before the Council at its Substantive session of 1995. Remarks in the present document will thus be limited to highlights of the discussion of the Commission with specific regard to coordination and cooperation.

23. In document E/CN.7/1995/15 and Add.2 the Commission was apprised by the Executive Director of UNDCP of the results of the 1995 spring session of ACC and of the implications for SWAP. A large number of delegations welcomed the statement made by ACC as an indication of high-level commitment to enhanced coordination within the system. Satisfaction was also expressed with the growing number of formal memoranda of understanding signed between UNDCP and other parts of the system. In recent years such agreements have been signed with FAO, ILO, UNESCO and UNIDO. In addition, a working arrangement has been signed between UNDCP and UNDP, governing the various aspects of cooperation between the two Programmes. Draft memoranda of understanding are under negotiation at present with IFAD, UPU and WHO.

24. The document also contained information on recent initiatives by ILO, FAO, UNESCO, WHO, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), UNIDO, the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch of the United Nations Office at Vienna and UNIDO within the context of the System-wide Action Plan. It should be noted in this connection that the most recent update of the System-wide Action Plan

was submitted to the General Assembly in 1994 via the report of the Secretary-General thereon (A/49/139-E/1994/57), with the next update due in 1996.

25. In his report and remarks to the Commission, the Executive Director drew particular attention to the need to complement high-level political commitment with full inter-agency collaboration at the base, particularly at the country level. He reiterated that only such a bottom-up approach will ensure the desired concerted effort throughout the system.

26. The Commission also considered document E/CN.7/1995/15/Add.1 and Corr.1, which contained the report of the Executive Director on the follow-up to resolution 6 (XXXVII) of 20 April 1994. 4/ In that resolution the Commission had requested the Executive Director to undertake an analysis of ways in which coordination could be improved in the drug control field within the United Nations system. The report, based in part on the findings of a group of consultants that the Commission had authorized him to engage to assist in making the analysis, presented a thorough examination of concrete possibilities and modalities for coordination in the system, with careful attention to the principle of comparative advantage. It analysed the special role of UNDCP in this connection and the various relationships that existed between it and other parts of the system. The opportunities for enhanced cooperation with UNDP, WHO, ILO, UNESCO, UNHCR, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank were then analysed in specific terms. The suggestions made were in line with the subsequent discussions and conclusions of ACC.

27. The Commission took note of the suggestions made and welcomed the numerous ideas emerging from both the ACC process and the initiatives emerging from the Commission's own decisions. Representatives of several countries drew attention to the need for Governments of all member States to provide the necessary political support to the ACC decisions in the governing bodies of other organizations. It adopted four resolutions on this agenda item - 9, 10, 11 and 12 (XXXVIII) - which are reproduced in chapter XII, section A, of the report of the Commission on its thirty-eighth session, which is before the Council.

## II. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

28. The conclusions of the 1994 coordination segment of the Council contained many suggestions of both a general and a specific nature. It has been possible to undertake concrete steps in furtherance of many of them, and the system has been responsive to the efforts made so far. Of particular significance is the strong position taken by ACC calling for integration of the drug abuse control issue into the work programmes of organizations across the United Nations system and for ensuring follow-up at the country level.

29. In the months since the Council agreed on the conclusions, it has been possible to set the stage for what could become a fully coordinated and systematic response on the part of the system to the complex issue of drug control. A response that involves all potential partners and is fully coordinated will of course take a certain amount of time to bring to reality. Ideally, it will not only need to involve the coordination of existing activities but will also require moving towards a proactive approach based on

consultative or joint planning. This is precisely the approach envisaged by the executive heads in the ACC meeting and corresponds as well to the original intention of the System-wide Action Plan.

## Notes

1/ Report of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, Vienna, 17-26 June 1987 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.87.I.18), chap. I, sect. A.

2/ Official Records of the United Nations Conference for the Adoption of a Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, Vienna, 25 November-20 December 1988 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.XI.5), vol. I.

3/ See General Assembly resolution S-17/2, annex.

4/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1994, Supplement No. 10 (E/1994/30), chap. XI.

---